

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The present invention provides a low cost information appliance that provides the ability to handle executable content from the internet and to have software capabilities upgraded. PC level performance and data synchronization are implicit to the design of the present invention. The invention consists of a single server and one or more terminals connected by a wired or wireless network for data traffic. Voice is carried over existing telephone lines or over the same network that carries the data traffic. The server is connected to the phone network and internet over a wired network. The server is capable of running a multi-user OS such as Solaris or Linux. The server has processing power, disk storage, and memory capacity similar to a PC (e.g. 400 MHz 32 bit CPU, 64 MB RAM, 4 GB disk) and in one embodiment has an uninterruptable power supply. The clients (the appliance itself) include a network interface to communicate with the server. In one embodiment, the connection network is capable of simultaneous voice and data traffic. In another embodiment, the client also includes a POTS interface. The display is a low cost display such as a SVGA 800 x 600 256 color LCD or CRT. The client includes RAM, ROM and a simple video controller. In one embodiment, the clients include a simple keyboard, pointing device, and a CPU such as a 100 MHz uSPARC2ep. In one embodiment, the client also includes a SmartCard or mag-swipe interface.